



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

123 E. Anapamu St. • Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-3000 • FAX (805) 568-3019
www.countyofsb.org/PWD

PRESS RELEASE
November 21, 2018

Contact:

Lael Wageneck, Public Information Officer
lwageneck@cosbpw.net
(805) 568-3425

COUNTY REGULATES USE OF SHARED MOTORIZED SCOOTERS

(Santa Barbara, Calif.) – With the increased visibility of on-demand shared mobility devices (like scooters and bikeshare), the Santa Barbara County Public Works Department would like to educate the public on the use of motorized scooters, and the efforts the County is undertaking to regulate them.

Scooters from vendors Bird and Lime arrived in Santa Barbara County in September. These scooters are recognized by State law as alternative low-emission or no-emission transportation and have the potential to help reduce congestion by providing last-mile connectivity between destinations, as well as alternative transportation for short trips. Scooters are currently regulated by the California Vehicle Code “rules of the road” for scooters. Under California law, scooters are considered similar to cars and bicycles, with rights to use the road for riding with some specific restrictions. Like bikes, they may be parked within the road right of way, including on sidewalks and parkways, with restrictions noted below.

Laws in the vehicle code state that motorized scooters **cannot be operated:**

- On a road with a speed limit in excess of 25 miles per hour unless operated in the bike lane.
- Without wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet if under 18 (Jan 2019).
- Without a valid driver’s license or instruction permit.
- While carrying passengers.
- While carrying any package, bundle, or article that prevents the operator from keeping at least one hand upon the handlebars.
- On sidewalks, except to exit or enter the road.
- Or left so that there is not an adequate path for pedestrian traffic.

To supplement State laws, the County proactively adopted regulations for shared mobility companies operating in the unincorporated County. On November 13, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved County code amendments requiring scooter companies to obtain encroachment permits with conditions. These conditions will require companies to manage their fleet sizes, retrieve scooters as needed, and monitor and correct improper parking and use of scooters. They will also require companies to respond to issues arising from the use of their vehicles; and set fees, impounding, and insurance conditions. Once the ordinance changes go into effect next month, permits issued to scooter companies will have these conditions included.

Residents with questions and comments about Bird scooters and contact their 24/7 customer service by calling (866) 205-2442 or emailing hello@bird.co. The Bird app includes a community

mode where the public can report inappropriate parking and repeat offenders can be suspended from the platform. Residents can call Lime about their bikes and scooters at (888)LIME-345 or email support@li.me. This information is also printed on their bikes and scooters.

Santa Barbara County Public Works is committed to efficiently providing, operating, and maintaining county roads to make everyday life as safe and convenient as possible for the public we serve. If you would like more information on scooters, or if you would like to give us any comments or concerns, please contact Chris Sneddon (csneddo@cosbpw.net).

-30-